

the condition of education 2004



INDICATOR 26

Characteristics of School Principals

The indicator and corresponding tables are taken directly from *The Condition of Education 2004*. Therefore, the page numbers may not be sequential.

Additional information about the survey data and supplementary notes can be found in the full report. For a copy of *The Condition of Education 2004* visit the NCES web site (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2004077>) or contact ED PUBs at 1-877-4ED-PUBS.

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School Characteristics and Climate

Characteristics of School Principals

Private elementary and secondary school principals are more likely to report a high degree of influence over curriculum and performance standards than their public school counterparts.

Research shows that principals can influence the quality of a school's educational effort (Tucker and Coddling 2002; Chubb and Moe 1990). This indicator examines the distribution of principals by various demographic and professional characteristics, including their perceived influence over issues of school governance, using data collected in 1999–2000.

The majority of principals in U.S. elementary schools are female; the majority of secondary school principals are male. At both levels, principals are most likely to be White and to have a master's degree, to be between the ages of 50 and 54, and to have taught between 10 and 19 years before becoming a principal, relative to other age and experience groupings, respectively (see supplemental tables 26-1 and 26-2).

At both the elementary and secondary levels, principals in public and private schools differ by their demographic characteristics and teaching experience. At both these levels, private schools were more likely than public schools to have principals age 55 and above and more likely to employ principals with 3 or fewer years of prior teaching experience.

Principals' perceptions of their own influence over a number of school governance functions also vary by the level and control of the school. For example, compared with their public school counterparts, private elementary school principals were more likely to report having a high degree of influence over establishing curriculum (67 vs. 31 percent), setting disciplinary policies (83 vs. 69 percent), and setting performance standards for students (64 vs. 36 percent) (see supplemental table 26-3). For the same governance functions, differences in the same direction were found at the secondary level as well.

What principals do on a daily basis also varies by the level and control of the school. For example, 49 percent of public elementary school principals reported that they supervised and evaluated faculty and staff every day, compared with 32 percent of principals at private elementary schools (see supplemental table 26-4). In addition, 84 percent of public secondary school principals reported that they maintained the physical security of students, faculty, and staff as an everyday professional activity, compared with 69 percent of principals at private secondary schools.

NOTE: Data exclude principals of combined elementary and secondary schools and are only for principals, not assistant principals.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), 1999–2000, "Public School Principal Survey," "Public Charter School Principal Survey," and "Private School Principal Survey."



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

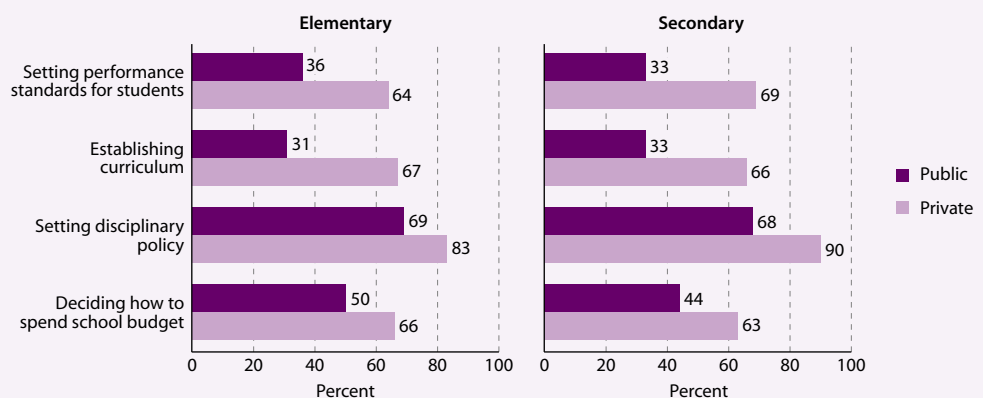
Supplemental Note 3

Supplemental Tables 26-1, 26-2, 26-3, 26-4

NCES 95–780; NCES 96–840; NCES 97–455; NCES 2003–060, table 85

Chubb and Moe 1990; Tucker and Coddling 2002

PRINCIPAL INFLUENCE: Percentage of principals who reported that they have a high degree of influence over specific school governance functions, by school level and control: 1999–2000



Characteristics of School Principals

Table 26-1. Percentage distribution of school principals by selected individual characteristics, by level and control of the school: 1999–2000

Individual characteristic	All principals ¹	Elementary			Secondary		
		All	Public	Private	All	Public	Private
Total	100.0	76.7	79.0	21.0	23.3	88.5	11.5
Sex							
Male	53.7	44.9	48.2	32.4	76.9	78.3	66.3
Female	46.4	55.1	51.8	67.6	23.1	21.8	33.7
Age							
Under 40	11.1	10.5	9.9	12.9	9.9	10.0	9.6
40–44	12.7	12.5	12.6	12.5	13.1	12.9	14.6
45–49	22.6	22.6	23.7	18.6	22.8	23.1	20.4
50–54	30.0	30.0	32.0	22.4	32.8	33.5	28.0
55 and above	23.7	24.3	21.9	33.6	21.4	20.6	27.3
Race/ethnicity ²							
American Indian	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.6!	1.1	1.1	0.9!
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.9	1.0	0.7!	1.9	0.7!	0.8!	0.3!
Black	9.8	11.1	11.8	8.1	7.6	8.4	1.3!
White	83.9	82.2	81.2	86.2	86.6	85.6	94.5
Hispanic	4.7	5.1	5.6	3.2	4.0	4.1	3.1!
Type of degree earned							
No degree	1.5	0.9	#	4.2	0.1!	#	1.1
Associate's	0.3	0.2!	#	0.7!	#	#	0.1!
Bachelor's	7.0	6.5	1.8	24.4	2.7	1.4	13.3
Master's	53.5	54.1	53.9	54.7	56.1	55.8	58.6
Education specialist ³	28.1	29.5	34.6	9.9	29.6	31.3	16.0
Doctoral/first-professional	9.8	8.9	9.7	6.1	11.5	11.6	10.9

#Rounds to zero.

!Interpret data with caution (estimates are unstable).

¹Includes principals of combined elementary and secondary schools.

²American Indian includes Alaska Native, Black includes African American, Pacific Islander includes Native Hawaiian, and Hispanic includes Latino. Racial categories exclude Hispanic origin.

³Teachers and principals who have completed a number of courses or credits beyond receipt of a master's degree are known as "education specialists." In most state and district salary schedules, such post-master's course-work qualifies teachers and principals for increases in their salary. Qualifying courses can take many forms and may or may not involve the receipt of a certificate or award. Typically, the completion of several such courses is required to be considered to be an "education specialist."

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. Data for principals of combined elementary and secondary schools not shown separately. See *supplemental note 3* for more information on the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), 1999–2000, "Public School Principal Survey," "Public Charter School Principal Survey," and "Private School Principal Survey."

Characteristics of School Principals

Table 26-2. Percentage distribution of school principals by selected professional characteristics, by level and control of the school: 1999–2000

Professional characteristic	All principals ¹	Elementary			Secondary		
		All	Public	Private	All	Public	Private
Total	100.0	76.7	79.0	21.0	23.3	88.5	11.5
Years as a principal							
3 or fewer	29.7	29.6	29.5	29.9	29.6	30.3	23.5
4–9	29.9	28.9	30.0	24.8	33.5	33.7	32.0
10–19	27.8	28.5	28.5	28.5	26.2	25.9	28.8
20 or more	12.7	13.0	12.0	16.8	10.8	10.1	15.8
Years of teaching experience before becoming principal							
3 or fewer	9.9	7.8	4.9	18.8	7.4	6.4	15.5
4–9	29.7	29.1	29.5	27.4	31.1	31.6	27.3
10–19	43.1	44.8	47.1	36.0	44.0	44.8	37.7
20 or more	17.3	18.4	18.5	17.8	17.5	17.2	19.6
Years of teaching experience since becoming principal							
3 or fewer	84.2	85.9	89.6	71.8	86.0	88.7	64.5
4–9	8.1	7.5	6.0	13.1	8.1	6.6	19.8
10–19	5.6	4.7	3.5	9.4	4.5	3.6	12.0
20 or more	2.1	1.9	0.9	5.8	1.4	1.2	3.7!
Average annual salary							
Less than \$30,000	7.1	6.1	0.4!	27.4	2.3	0.1!	18.6
\$30,000–44,999	12.3	12.4	4.2	43.0	6.9	5.0	20.4
\$45,000–59,999	25.7	26.5	28.5	19.2	24.7	24.7	24.3
\$60,000–74,999	31.6	32.9	40.2	5.2	34.4	36.5	19.1
\$75,000–99,999	21.0	20.4	25.1	3.3	27.9	30.4	9.4
\$100,000 or more	2.4	1.7	1.6	1.9	3.9	3.3	8.2

!Interpret data with caution (estimates are unstable).

¹Includes principals of combined elementary and secondary schools.

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. Data for principals of combined elementary and secondary schools not shown separately. See *supplemental note 3* for more information on the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), 1999–2000, “Public School Principal Survey,” “Public Charter School Principal Survey,” and “Private School Principal Survey.”

Characteristics of School Principals

Table 26-3. Percentage of school principals who reported that they have a high degree of influence over specific school governance functions, by level and control of the school: 1999–2000

School governance function	All principals ¹	Elementary			Secondary		
		All	Public	Private	All	Public	Private
Setting performance standards for students	42.3	42.1	36.3	64.1	37.2	33.1	69.2
Establishing curriculum	39.8	38.4	30.8	67.2	36.5	32.6	66.4
Evaluating teachers at school	80.7	81.1	80.3	84.1	80.9	79.8	89.5
Hiring new full-time teachers	76.6	76.4	74.3	84.4	76.6	74.6	92.2
Setting disciplinary policy	72.1	72.1	69.2	83.1	70.4	68.0	89.7
Deciding how to spend school budget	52.5	53.8	50.5	66.3	46.1	43.9	63.2

¹Includes principals of combined elementary and secondary schools.

NOTE: Data for principals of combined elementary and secondary schools not shown separately. See *supplemental note 3* for more information on the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), 1999–2000, “Public School Principal Survey,” “Public Charter School Principal Survey,” and “Private School Principal Survey.”

Table 26-4. Percentage of school principals who reported that they engaged in selected professional and managerial activities every day, by level and control of the school: 1999–2000

Professional activity	All principals ¹	Elementary			Secondary		
		All	Public	Private	All	Public	Private
Supervise and evaluate faculty and other staff	44.5	45.7	49.4	31.7	44.7	45.7	36.7
Guide the development and evaluation of curriculum and instruction	24.9	27.0	28.6	20.7	21.0	21.1	19.8
Facilitate student learning (e.g., eliminate barriers to student learning, establish high expectations for students)	50.7	53.7	56.2	44.0	45.7	45.8	45.1
Provide and engage staff in professional development activities	7.9	7.9	8.3	6.8	7.6	7.6	7.7
Build professional community among faculty and other staff	38.7	40.7	41.5	37.7	35.5	35.4	35.9
Maintain the physical security of students, faculty, and other staff	83.2	84.9	87.1	76.3	82.6	84.4	68.9
Manage school facilities, resources, procedures (e.g., maintenance, budget, schedule)	79.0	80.3	82.7	71.1	79.3	80.3	71.6

¹Includes principals of combined elementary and secondary schools.

NOTE: Data for principals of combined elementary and secondary schools not shown separately. See *supplemental note 3* for more information on the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), 1999–2000, “Public School Principal Survey,” “Public Charter School Principal Survey,” and “Private School Principal Survey.”

Characteristics of School Principals

Table S26. Standard errors for the percentage of principals who reported that they have a high degree of influence over specific school governance functions: 1999–2000

School governance function	Setting performance standards for students	Establishing curriculum	Setting disciplinary policy	Deciding how to spend school budget
Elementary				
Public	0.94	0.83	0.89	0.89
Private	1.33	1.27	1.02	1.64
Secondary				
Public	0.97	0.88	0.79	0.88
Private	2.79	2.97	1.77	2.96

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), 1999–2000, “Public School Principal Survey,” “Public Charter School Principal Survey,” and “Private School Principal Survey.”

Characteristics of School Principals

Table S26-1. Standard errors for the percentage distribution of school principals by selected individual characteristics, by level and control of the school: 1999–2000

Individual characteristic	All principals	Elementary			Secondary		
		All	Public	Private	All	Public	Private
Total	†	0.20	0.26	0.26	0.20	0.53	0.53
Sex							
Male	0.58	0.75	0.89	1.31	0.75	0.75	3.02
Female	0.58	0.75	0.89	1.31	0.75	0.75	3.02
Age							
Under 40	0.33	0.44	0.47	1.04	0.47	0.46	1.98
40–44	0.32	0.44	0.51	1.09	0.52	0.55	1.75
45–49	0.57	0.81	0.88	1.18	0.72	0.79	2.20
50–54	0.59	0.79	0.97	1.45	0.84	0.90	2.84
55 and above	0.53	0.70	0.78	1.30	0.75	0.75	2.77
Race/ethnicity							
American Indian	0.07	0.09	0.10	0.25	0.14	0.15	0.47
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.13	0.15	0.16	0.39	0.25	0.27	0.19
Black	0.33	0.47	0.53	0.95	0.40	0.44	0.69
White	0.48	0.65	0.75	1.08	0.58	0.60	1.50
Hispanic	0.30	0.39	0.46	0.62	0.35	0.37	1.25
Type of degree earned							
No degree	0.17	0.20	#	0.95	0.04	#	0.32
Associate's	0.06	0.05	#	0.24	0.01	#	0.12
Bachelor's	0.28	0.37	0.28	1.35	0.41	0.23	2.68
Master's	0.52	0.72	0.85	1.39	0.93	0.90	3.33
Education specialist	0.50	0.69	0.82	0.76	0.75	0.77	1.93
Doctoral/first-professional	0.35	0.47	0.57	0.87	0.65	0.69	1.57

†Not applicable.

#Rounds to zero.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), 1999–2000, "Public School Principal Survey," "Public Charter School Principal Survey," and "Private School Principal Survey."

Characteristics of School Principals

Table S26-2. Standard errors for the percentage distribution of school principals by selected professional characteristics, by level and control of the school: 1999–2000

Professional characteristic	All principals	Elementary			Secondary		
		All	Public	Private	All	Public	Private
Total	†	0.20	0.26	0.26	0.20	0.53	0.53
Years as a principal							
3 or fewer	0.50	0.67	0.81	1.48	0.72	0.71	2.22
4–9	0.50	0.71	0.81	1.62	0.79	0.83	2.71
10–19	0.52	0.68	0.80	1.22	0.79	0.81	2.61
20 or more	0.38	0.50	0.50	1.18	0.58	0.60	2.29
Years of teaching experience before becoming principal							
3 or fewer	0.34	0.41	0.36	1.35	0.59	0.53	2.79
4–9	0.52	0.71	0.80	1.56	0.86	0.85	2.72
10–19	0.58	0.76	0.92	1.35	0.86	0.84	3.02
20 or more	0.50	0.62	0.67	1.29	0.68	0.66	2.32
Years of teaching experience since becoming principal							
3 or fewer	0.40	0.49	0.52	1.32	0.61	0.56	2.56
4–9	0.30	0.39	0.41	1.24	0.49	0.46	2.09
10–19	0.31	0.38	0.39	0.76	0.33	0.30	1.60
20 or more	0.16	0.19	0.19	0.62	0.23	0.19	1.28
Average annual salary							
Less than \$30,000	0.31	0.36	0.13	1.56	0.34	0.04	2.69
\$30,000–44,999	0.34	0.44	0.28	1.68	0.36	0.27	2.25
\$45,000–59,999	0.51	0.62	0.71	1.16	0.69	0.76	2.52
\$60,000–74,999	0.53	0.69	0.85	0.59	0.89	0.95	2.27
\$75,000–99,999	0.42	0.58	0.72	0.49	0.74	0.84	1.03
\$100,000 or more	0.16	0.21	0.23	0.38	0.28	0.27	1.05

†Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), 1999–2000, “Public School Principal Survey,” “Public Charter School Principal Survey,” and “Private School Principal Survey.”

Characteristics of School Principals

Table S26-3. Standard errors for the percentage of school principals who reported that they have a high degree of influence over specific school governance functions, by level and control of the school: 1999–2000

School governance function	All principals	Elementary			Secondary		
		All	Public	Private	All	Public	Private
Setting performance standards for students	0.51	0.74	0.94	1.33	0.89	0.97	2.79
Establishing curriculum	0.55	0.74	0.83	1.27	0.85	0.88	2.97
Evaluating teachers at school	0.45	0.64	0.76	1.16	0.68	0.71	2.26
Hiring new full-time teachers	0.51	0.64	0.73	1.23	0.69	0.74	2.01
Setting disciplinary policy	0.53	0.72	0.89	1.02	0.72	0.79	1.77
Deciding how to spend school budget	0.53	0.70	0.89	1.64	0.84	0.88	2.96

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), 1999–2000, “Public School Principal Survey,” “Public Charter School Principal Survey,” and “Private School Principal Survey.”

Table S26-4. Standard errors for the percentage of school principals who reported that they engaged in selected professional and managerial activities every day, by level and control of the school: 1999–2000

Professional activity	All principals	Elementary			Secondary		
		All	Public	Private	All	Public	Private
Supervise and evaluate faculty and other staff	0.57	0.80	0.97	1.31	0.86	0.88	2.96
Guide the development and evaluation of curriculum and instruction	0.47	0.65	0.75	1.43	0.59	0.56	3.06
Facilitate student learning (e.g., eliminate barriers to student learning, establish high expectations for students)	0.52	0.77	0.86	1.64	0.72	0.75	3.07
Provide and engage staff in professional development activities	0.32	0.39	0.50	0.68	0.48	0.51	1.26
Build professional community among faculty and other staff	0.56	0.78	0.89	1.51	0.88	0.90	2.71
Maintain the physical security of students, faculty, and other staff	0.34	0.46	0.53	1.43	0.66	0.70	2.06
Manage school facilities, resources, procedures (e.g., maintenance, budget, schedule)	0.47	0.58	0.62	1.61	0.78	0.81	2.35

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), 1999–2000, “Public School Principal Survey,” “Public Charter School Principal Survey,” and “Private School Principal Survey.”